

BE LIKE THE BEE

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BEE LIKE THE BEE

Acknowledgements:

This book is mainly inspired by a Friday Khutbah from Ustadh Noman Ali Khan in which he explained the verses of Surah An-Nahl dealing with Honey Bee and how we can take heed from what it does. All readers are encouraged to watch this video (available on Australian Islamic Library website) in addition to reading this book.

May Allah accept this effort and reward all those who contributed to presenting this book.

TABLE OF CONTENTS:

SYNOPSIS:.....	6
Compelling Need to Contemplate:.....	7
An-Nahl:	9
Quran highlighting the important role of female bees:.....	11
The Liquid Emerging from their bellies:	13
Varying colours of honey:.....	14
Healing for People:	14
How to “Be like the Bee”:.....	15
Understanding the Purpose of Life:.....	16
Eating from Pure Sources	16
Mind what comes out of our mouths:	17
Mind Our relationships:.....	18
Not cutting in from other’s rizk:.....	20
Pains-taking:	21
Leaving the Ego:.....	22
Having a role to play:	22
Team Work.....	23
Not letting anyone fall:.....	24
Group Productivity:.....	24
Humility and humbleness:	25
No good deed is too small:	26
Loyalty to Just ruler and government:.....	26
Living within one’s means:	27
Understanding the times and environment we are living in:.....	28
Honest Communication:.....	28
Consultation:.....	29

Ability to rise up from ashes:	30
Learning from our experiences and history	30
Conclusion:.....	31

SYNOPSIS:

In this book, we have presented the ayahs from Surah An-Nahl where Allah explains how it orders the female bees to take homes in mountains, trees and what humans make for them. We then elaborate the blessings from bees dwelling in what humans prepare for them to be taken as home and how it gives rise to the field of bee-farming.

Following that is the explanation of Quranic miracle by calling female bees to do these tasks, the fact that was not proven by science till recent times after the invention of microscopes. It is a clear sign of any person with an open heart to accept the beautiful message of Islam.

We then present some benefits of honey as mentioned in the ayah and the fact that it is available in different colors.

This explanation is followed by a hadith from our beloved Prophet Muhammad ﷺ in which he advised believers to be like a bee. We then present an analysis of some key behaviours from bees and relate to how believers can be like a bee.

May Allah accept this effort and make it trigger valuable changes in the life of its author and those who read it.

Ameen.

Compelling Need to Contemplate:

The way a true believer thinks is distinctly different from all other beings. The reason for this is the book of Allah which invites people to think and ponder. Allah presents numerous facts and important points in the glorious Quran and invites humanity to ponder and reflect.

On the day of judgement, there would be a group of people who would be fed into the hell-fire and when asked about the reason for this fate,

وَقَالُوا لَوْ كُنَّا نَسْمَعُ أَوْ نَعْقِلُ مَا كُنَّا فِي أَصْحَابِ السَّعِيرِ ﴿١٠﴾

“

And they shall say: Had we but listened or pondered, we should not have been among the inmates of the burning fire.

”

(Quran 67:10)

We therefore have time at our hands now to stop and think.

There are actually two paths which we can take. And either of these will lead to our Lord and save us from the hellfire. Allah tells us about both of these paths through the words of inmates of Hell. You see their crime was not only their refusal to make Him their Rabb. Their crime was not only their denying that He would send down revelation. Their crime was also their failure to take either of these two paths. Both of these paths were in front of them. Both of these paths were available for them. But they chose not to take either of them. They chose instead to feed their own egos and their own greed and their own lusts.

‘Listening’ in above verse can have two connotations. One, not listening to the right things at all and keeping ourselves immersed in the matters meant for short-term joys only ignoring the never-ending after-life. The other form of not listening can be

when the right words do reach our ears but cannot make their way beyond that. We do listen to khutbahs, speeches, and advices from elder etc. but do not act upon that. So, in effect, we are not listening to what they are saying.

But the other point that we have to keep in mind is the reason why “or” was used in above ayah. Muslim is not only supposed to listen to good stuff but also to ponder, reflect and think constantly. There are plenty of reasons to contemplate even when we are not sitting and listening to a sheikh or watching a religious program.

If we glance through the Quran we will find that it abounds with passages dealing with the phenomena of nature and man is repeatedly exhorted to penetrate in its mysteries, to understand them and appreciate the Glory of God. The Quran says that God did not create the Heavens and the Earth and all that is between them but with truth. The World is not an illusion, nor without purpose. It points out that:

“ —

Verily! In the creation of the heavens and the earth, and in the alternation of night and day, there are indeed signs for men of understanding.

— ”

(Quran 3:190)

Nearly one-eighth of the Holy Quran urges readers to study nature, history, the Quran itself and humanity at large. The text employs a range of expressions in its appeal to those who listen (يسمعون), those who think (يتفكرون), those who reflect (يتدبرون), those who observe (ينظرون), those who exercise their intellect (يعقلون), those who take heed and remember (يتذكرون), those who ask questions (يسئلون), those who develop an insight (يفقهون) and those who know (يعلمون).

An-Nahl:

An-Nahl¹ in Arabic refers to honey bee and this is what we are going to discuss in this booklet in the light of Quran and hadith.

Allah SWT says in the Quran:

وَأَوْحَىٰ رَبُّكَ إِلَى النَّحْلِ أَنِ اتَّخِذِي مِنَ الْجِبَالِ بُيُوتًا وَمِنَ الشَّجَرِ وَمِمَّا
يَعْرِشُونَ ﴿٦٨﴾

“

And your Lord inspired to the bee, “Prepare for thyself dwellings in mountains and in trees, and in what [men] may build [for thee by way of hives]

”

ثُمَّ كُلِي مِن كُلِّ الثَّمَرَاتِ فَاسْلُكِي سُبُلَ رَبِّكِ ذُلًّا يَخْرُجُ مِنْ بُطُونِهَا
شَرَابٌ مُّخْتَلِفٌ أَلْوَنُهُ فِيهِ شِفَاءٌ لِّلنَّاسِ إِنَّ فِي ذَٰلِكَ لَآيَةً لِّقَوْمٍ
يَتَفَكَّرُونَ ﴿٦٩﴾

“

Then eat from all the fruits and follow the ways of your Lord laid down [for you].” There emerges from their bellies a drink, varying in colours, in which there is healing for people. Indeed in that is a sign for a people who give thought.

”

The lexical meaning of the Arabic word ('wahi' from which وَأَوْحَى is derived) is a secret inspiration. The Qur'an has used this word both for the instinctive inspiration by Allah to His creation in

¹ Quran's Chapter 16 is called An-Nahl. There are many mathematical facts attached to this surah as well as the number 16 when we analyze various aspects of this surah. Number of chromosomes in male honey bee are 16. In female, it is 16x2 = 32. The number of verses in this surah are 16 x 8 = 128. Verses 68 and 69 of this Surah mention the honey-bees. The first verse, 68 has 13 words. If we count the words from the beginning of this surah up to the word honey-bee (Nahl) in that verse, we come up with 884 letters. Let us see if this number has any meaning. This number is equal to the product of the verse number 68 (68X13=884).

general and for the Revelation towards His Prophets in particular. In this Ayah Allah SWT mentions that He sends wahi to the bee and inspires it with faculties to perform the whole of its wonderful work instinctively. The same is true of the bird that learns to fly, the fish that learns to swim and the newly born child that learns to suck milk etc. However, out of all the animals, Allah has chosen to mentioned 'Bee', something usually considered insignificant, as a special example. This demands from us a reflection and thinking on 'why'.

In above Ayah, Allah has used the word "أَتَّخِذِي" which means direct command. The command is to make or erect homes in mountains, trees and what people make for them to do the farming.

First of all, Allah made the point to mention that He commands the bee in the form of Wahi and communicates where it should build its home, essentially allowing all the bee farming to happen.

As a matter of fact, bee farming is not just about honey. Most of the farming relies on pollination through bees. For example California has some of the biggest and oldest farms in the world producing half of the US supply of fruits, nuts, and vegetables at an annual value of \$16.45 billion, and exporting \$6.5 billion of food and agricultural commodities abroad.

"In the United States, over 100 crops are **bee-pollinated**, and 15–30% of the average American diet is comprised of bee-pollinated foods. Thus, bee-pollinated crops make up an important component of human dietary stability and diversity. Some of the fruits and vegetables requiring bee pollination include: alfalfa, almond, apple, avocado, cantaloupe, cucumber, kiwi, plum, squash, sunflower, watermelon, and selected cultivars of apricot, citrus, peach, and strawberry."ⁱ

Allah Azawajal revealed to bee that it can make its home in the mountains, and it can make its home in the trees. But had Allah SWT not mentioned "وَمَا يَعْشَوْنَ", we would have only found honey

bees working in trees and mountains and would have never been able to farm them. But Allah made things easy for us so that we can ponder on His blessings and become thankful.

So you and I enjoy the supply of the honey bees because of Allah giving it permission. It makes us reflect on the fact that all of what we enjoy from Allah's creation is because Allah explicitly commands its creation, in this particular case, the bee to be at our service. Allah SWT tells bees that when people build for you a home, use it and dwell in there.

Quran highlighting the important role of female bees:

In order to understand this point, I would briefly highlight the way verbs are used in Arabic language.

The words in the Arabic language are divided into two categories in terms of gender: the words that are used for female beings are called muannath (feminine) and the words that are used for male beings are called mudhakkar (masculine).

In Arabic language, things are either muannath (feminine) or mudhakkar (masculine) whether they are animals, plants; objects or verbs. When the doer of sentence is male, the verb is conjugated as masculine and when the doer of sentence is female, the verb is conjugated as feminine. That is, there is coherence between the verb and doer in terms of gender. Even if there is one male in the group, the masculine verb is used.

In the above mentioned ayahs, Allah SWT talks about An-Nahl. In Arabic, the bee is written as "Nahl" in the same way both for male and female. This word has no feminine form. However, the Qur'an uses the feminine form of the verb when it gives information about the inspiration which is given to the bee and what the bee does. As we have mentioned before, verbs in the Arabic language are conjugated in different ways according to the gender.

We will now present the next ayah as well

This is also valid in many other languages of the world. Important points to note here are:

- In the verse, in order to express the meaning "make habitation", the word اِتَّخَذِي, (ittakhadhi) which is used (feminine verb explaining that decision to take place as home is made by female bee). It is now scientifically proven that this work of identifying a suitable home is done by scout bees who are females. The feminine verb is preferred here instead of اِتَّخَذَ, (ittakhadh) which could have been used had there been any male in the group. It is also scientifically proven that male bee have no role in identifying the home, building it or doing any other form of work. Their only role is to mate with queen bee after which they almost immediately die. Surviving male bees are also thrown out of the bee hive in winters in order to preserve food. They shortly die afterwards.
- Similarly feminine verb is used in order to express the meaning "eat of all fruits" - the word of كُلِّي, (kulliy). It is preferred over كُلْ, (kul) which is used for the masculine. We know now that this work is also done ONLY by female bees.
- Female verb is also used to express the meaning "follow the ways of your Lord" - the word of اُسْلُكِي, (uslukiy) which is used for the feminine, is preferred instead of اُسْلُكْ, (usluk) which is used for the masculine. There is a whole science attached to how the female bees follow certain path, acquire their raw material and come back to their place of dwelling.
- The pronoun "their" in the sentence "There comes forth from their bellies" is expressed with the word هَا, (ha) which refers to the feminine instead of the word هُوَ, (hu) which refers to the masculine. It is also scientifically proven that honey is prepared in the bellies of female bees only.

It is clearly a matter for us to reflect and contemplate. The information about dominant role of female bees in this affair was given to us more than 1400 hundred years ago. It was impossible for the people to know the division of labour in the honeycomb at the time of the revelation of the Qur'an. The people of that time did neither know that the worker bees were female nor that the works of building the comb and producing honey were performed by female worker bees. However, the Qur'an informed us about this provoking the thought process for all the people to come.

Is there any other better way to respond to this other than accepting the Glorious Qur'an as the final revelation from God and follow it?

The Liquid Emerging from their bellies:

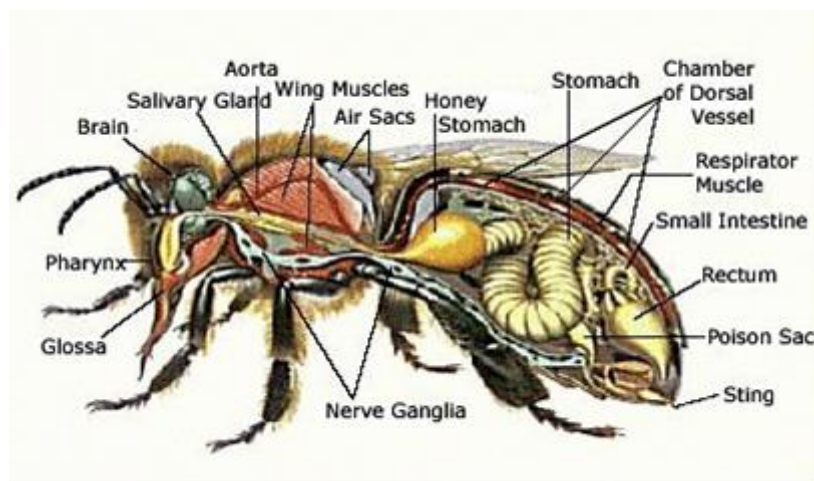
Let us now look at that part of Ayah again which talks about honey emerging from the bellies:

“

There emerges from their bellies a drink, varying in colors, in which there is healing for people. Indeed in that is a sign for a people who give thought.”

”

It was not known until not too long ago, that honey bees collect nectar from various sources and store them in honey stomach (their bellies) where it gets processed and gets converted to honey.



Flower nectars, containing a number of beneficial substances from humans, are processed in the bellies of honey bees through following two important processes:

- **Enzymes** get mixed with nectar and change its chemical composition
- Moisture gets **evaporated**, leaving only about 18-percent water in honey.

The effect is to make honey a very stable food. It naturally resists molds, fungi and other bacteria, allowing it to last for years without refrigeration.

Varying colours of honey:

Unlike cane sugar, which tastes the same wherever it is grown, the colour and flavour of honey is very specific to the nectar of the flower from which it is drawn, and the region where the flower grows. Eucalyptus honey from California, for example, can taste and look different from Australian eucalyptus honey.

The colour and flavour of honeys differ depending on the nectar source, the blossoms visited by the honey bees. Honey colour ranges from nearly colourless to dark brown, and its flavour varies from delectably mild to distinctively bold.

Healing for People:

The beloved Prophet, ﷺ said,

“ _____

"Make use of the two remedies: honey and the Quran."

_____”

(Tirmithi, Ibn Majah and Baihaqi)

If we understand Quran, it will heal our inner illnesses and honey is a cure for many of bodily illnesses.

Researches have testified to the fact mentioned in Quran and Sunnah about the healing effects of honey by coming up with a number of medical benefits of its consumptions including its benefit as a cure for cancer and being an antioxidant, its antibacterial nature, its vitamin contents, its ability to fight allergies, its role as immunity enhancer, its impact in reducing muscle fatigue, its role as sleep aid when mixed with milk, its ability to suppress to GERD (a digestive disease in which stomach content comes to oesophagus causing burning) and a number of other health and healing benefits. We are not dependant on science, however, to believe in the timeless facts mentioning in Quran and Sunnah. Most of these facts were unknown and even unbelievable to people a few centuries before us. Also, there were many facts which were understood in a different way in which they are understood today. It is an open invitation for all to ponder upon this and all the other facts communicated to humanity in the age when there were no telescopes or microscopes available to identify these glorious timeless facts.

How to “Be like the Bee”:

The concept of being like a bee comes to us from the Hadith of our beloved prophet Muhammad ﷺ:

“

By the One in whose hand is the soul of Muhammad, the believer is like a bee which eats that which is pure and wholesome and lays that which is pure and wholesome. When it lands on something it does not break or ruin it.

”

(Ahmad)

Now let us mention some of the characteristics of bees and how to be like them:

Understanding the Purpose of Life:

Bees understand the purpose of their being and live their whole life to achieve it. They know that they may not be able to eat all what they are gathering, but they continue to do so and give it back to their community. So should be the case of believer. We should not just be concerned about ourselves only and should not spend our whole life to better our dunya. We need to see the bigger purpose of life and act accordingly. How useful would be a worker whose master lays down his purpose in front of him and his actions are exactly the opposite.

“ —

On the authority of Ibn ‘Umar, radiyallahu ‘anhuma, who said: The Messenger of Allah, sallallahu ‘alayhi wasallam, took me by the shoulder and said:

“Be in this world as though you were a stranger or a traveller/ wayfarer.” Ibn ‘Umar used to say:

“When evening comes, do not expect (to live till) morning, and when morning comes, do not expect (to live till) evening. Take from your health (a preparation) for your illness and from your life for your death.”

”

—
[Al-Bukhari]

Eating from Pure Sources

The bee only eats from flowers which are ‘tayyib’ (pure and wholesome). It is not attracted to repulsive things, unlike some other insects. Likewise the believer should only eat that which is pure and wholesome and should not be attracted to the undesirable. It is not only about the food that we eat, but also about the manners in which we earn it.

“ —

Abu Hurayrah narrated that the Prophet (sallallahu alaihi wa sallam) said:

O People! Allah is al-Tayyib (Pure), and He only accepts that which is pure! Allah has commanded the believers what He has commanded the Messengers, for He said, 'O Messengers! Eat from the pure foods, and do right,' and He said, 'O you who believe! Eat from the pure and good foods We have given you.'

—”

“ —

Hazrat Abu Saeed [radhiallaahu anhu] says that Nabi [صلی اللہ علیہ وسلم] said: "Whosoever maintained himself on legitimate earning, followed the prophets traditions and refrained from doing mischief, deserves Jannat and would be admitted to it."

—”

Mind what comes out of our mouths:

What comes out of bee's mouth is a purified liquid, honey, which gives a cure to humanity from illnesses (as explained in previous section). So should be what comes out from believer mouth – his words. Our words should be clean and beautiful and targeted to benefit humanity. Honey doesn't come out of bee's mouth immediately rather it is processed and purely treated before coming out. So should be the case with what we choose to say. It should be well-thought-out and reflected upon rather than a spontaneous unthoughtful response.

“ —

The Messenger (S.A.W.) warned us about the seriousness of speaking. The prophet said, in an authentic hadith reported by Imams At-Tirmithi and Ibn-Majah, that, "A person may say a word that is pleasing to Allah (S.W.T.) and he may not think much of it, but Allah (S.W.T.) will, (because of that word), bestow his pleasure upon him on the Day of Judgment, and a person may say a word that is displeasing to Allah (S.W.T.), and he may not think much of it, but Allah will have, (because of that word) put his wrath and anger on him on the Day of Judgment."

—”

“
And be moderate in your pace and lower your voice; indeed, the most disagreeable of sounds is the voice of donkeys... But of the people is he who disputes about Allah without knowledge or guidance or an enlightening Book.” (Qur’an, 31:19-20)
”

“
The Prophet Muhammad ﷺ (peace be upon him) said: “He who gave up disputing while he is right, a palace of high rank in Paradise will be built for him. He who gave up disputing while he is a fabricator, a palace in the center of Paradise will be built for him.” (al-Tirmidhi who declared it as hasan)
”

“
The Messenger of Allah ﷺ said, “Kind speech and feeding (the hungry) guarantee you Paradise.” (al-Tabarani)
”

Mind Our relationships:

The bee respects what eats from and does not break or destroy the flowers upon which it lands and eat from. Likewise the believer should be gentle in his dealings with the creation of Allah should not harm them in any capacity or by any unlawful ways. Bees even go further in treatment of the place they earn from.

“
Allah SWT says:
Do no mischief on the earth, after it has been set in order, but call on Him with fear and longing (in your hearts): for the Mercy of Allah is (always) near to those who do good things.
(al-A’raf 7:56)
”

In the process of gathering nectar, a bee gives back more to the flower; it transfers pollen grains from one flower to another and hence pollinates the flower resulting in its future growth. In our relationships, with where we earn from and those who come in contact with us, we should try and give more just like the bee does. Islam wants us to be generous with our love, attention, affection, mercy and time. This also gives us a message of mercy and love towards our friends, spouses and children who deserve to be treated with extra special kindness and consideration. If our demands from them are never-ending and we continue to be hard and tough on them, they can ultimately break – something that a honey bee never does to what it comes in contact with. It keeps on fluttering its wings while picking nectar to ensure that the delicate part of the flower it is drawing from never breaks.

“
Abdullah ibn Amr reported: The Messenger of Allah, peace and blessings be upon him, said, “Those who are merciful will be shown mercy by the Merciful. Be merciful to those on the earth and the One above the heavens will have mercy upon you. The womb is derived from the Merciful, so whoever keeps relations with his family then Allah will keep relations with him, and whoever abandons his family then Allah will abandon him.” (Tirmidhi)
”

“
The Prophet (peace be upon him) said: "When you smile to your brother's face, it is charity." (Tirmidhi)
”

“
Abd Allah b. al-Hârith R.A. said: "I have never seen anyone more in the habit of smiling than Allah's Messenger." (Tirmidhi)
”

“
Our beloved prophet Muhammad (ﷺ) also said:
“it is only the evil one who abuses them (women) and the honored one
is he who honors them”
”

“
"God is Kind and likes kindness in all things."
”
(Bukhari/ Muslim)

Not cutting in from other's rizk:

When another bee from a different hive passes by a flower and it smells and observes if a flower has already got a relationship with another hive. If it does, it leaves the flower alone. Believers should also exhibit this quality and should never try to cut from rizk for other believers. Allah's rizq is vast. True believer don't have to take the food out of other believer's plate and put into theirs.

“
"None of you will have faith till he wishes
for his brother what he likes for himself." (Bukhari)
”

“
"Do not rejoice over the troubles of your brother, lest God might have
mercy on him and involve you in this trouble."
”

“
Beloved Prophet Muhammad ﷺ said:
“I swear by the Holy Being in whose power my life is, any one of you
cannot be a true believer unless he desires for his fellow-brother what
he desires for himself.”
”

“
_____”
“A Muslim is the brother of another Muslim, so he should not oppress him, forsake him, or despise him.”
_____”

“
_____”
“It is sufficient evil for a Muslim that he should look down upon his brother. The life, wealth, and honor of a Muslim are inviolable by another Muslim.” [Sahih Muslim]
_____”

“
_____”
‘Abdullah ibn ‘Amr(Radiyallahu Anhu) said, “A man asked the Prophet(Peace be upon him), ‘Which aspect of Islam is best?’ He said, ‘FEEDING PEOPLE and greeting those you know and those you do not know.’” (Bukhari)
_____”

“
_____”
Ibn ‘Abbas, may Allah be pleased with him reported that the Prophet, may Allah bless him and grant him peace, said, “He who eats to satisfaction while his neighbour is hungry is not a mumin.” (Al-Hakim)
_____”

Pains-taking:

We have all heard the saying ‘Busy as a bee’ and it really does sum up their lives. Honey bees may collectively travel 55,000 miles and visit two million flowers to gather enough nectar to make just a pound of honey! Let’s take inspiration from them and whatever actions we do, let’s work hard to achieve the best results.

“
_____”
The Messenger of Allah, (saw) said, “Verily, Allah loves that when anyone of you does a job he should perfect it” (Al-Bayhaqi).
_____”

In serving our community, we may have to take extraordinary toil and pain. But we should be determined to bear it for the sake of greater benefit of the Ummah.

Leaving the Ego:

Ego is not a feature of honeybees: their first duty is to the colony and bees will sacrifice themselves without hesitation if they perceive a threat to the colony. True believers also sacrifice all their possession and ego when it comes down to their religion – their true identity.

“ _____

Prophet ﷺ said:

Shall I not tell you about the companions of Paradise? They are every humble person considered weak, but if they gave an oath by Allah it would be fulfilled. Shall I not tell you about the companions of Hellfire? They are every harsh, haughty, and arrogant person.

_____” (Bukhari)

Having a role to play:

Bees live together in well-organized hives and every bee has a role to play in its community. The queen bee lays the eggs; worker bees clean the hive, keep the hive temperature cool; Nurse bees take care of the young ones; some bees collect nectar and bring it to the hive; security bees protect from intruders. Likewise, believers should also contribute to their community in some way or capacity. We all have a responsibility towards our religion, our community and our people. Whatever we are good at, we should pay back to our religion and community with those special skills.

“ _____

Abdullah ibn Umar reported: The Messenger of Allah, peace and blessings be upon him, said, “Every one of you is a shepherd and is responsible for his flock. The leader of people is a guardian and is responsible for his subjects. A man is the guardian of his family and he is responsible for them. A woman is the guardian of her husband’s home and his children and she is responsible for them. The servant of a man is a guardian of the property of his master and he is responsible

for it. Surely, every one of you is a shepherd and responsible for his flock.”

—”

Source: Sahih Bukhari

Team Work

Bees recognize the fact that when we benefit someone else, we are all benefiting. A bee cannot build a hive by itself. All bees have to contribute and do well. When our faith becomes weak, we forget this important principle of sharing our success. When someone is doing well we get jealous. And if we are doing well, we do not tell other the reasons for this success so that they might copy and also become successful. Such an attitude can clearly break communities.

Also, a bee cannot survive or make honey on its own, it has to co-operate with its fellow bees. True believers are exactly the same. They take care of their relationships well and work with others to create harmonious and productive societies where each person feels valuable and important. Honeybees achieve extraordinary things by working together. Fifty thousand workers can shift a lot of stuff. Co-operation is the key to their success: tens of thousands of individuals behaving as a single organism.

“

“The Believers are but a single Brotherhood.” [Al-Hujurat 49:10]

—”

“

“The Believers, men and women, are protectors one of another: they enjoin the ma`roof (all of Islam), and forbid the munkar (all that is evil; kufr): they observe regular prayers, pay Zakat, and obey Allah and His Messenger. On them will Allah pour His mercy: for Allah is Exalted in power, Wise.” [9:71]

—”

Not letting anyone fall:

Bees work together in large groups and if an individual or a part of the group fails, other members make up for it. That's why productivity never suffers. As believers, we should be more than willing to assist members of our community who are in need of a hand or those who are not able to fulfil their roles, physically or financially.

“
“Whosoever relieves from a believer some grief pertaining to this world, Allah will relieve from him some grief pertaining to the Hereafter. Whosoever alleviates the difficulties of a needy person who cannot pay his debt, Allah will alleviate his difficulties in both this world and the Hereafter. Whosoever conceals the faults of a Muslim, Allah will conceal his faults in this world and the Hereafter. Allah will aid a servant (of His) so long as the servant aids his brother. Whosoever follows a path to seek knowledge therein, Allah will make easy for him a path to Paradise.” (Muslim)
”
—

“
The Prophet said, “A faithful believer to a faithful believer is like the bricks of a wall, enforcing each other.” While (saying that) the Prophet clasped his hands, by interlacing his fingers.
”
—

Group Productivity:

Bees stick to tasks assigned to them and complete them to the best of their abilities. There is a defined hierarchy. Similarly, when working in groups e.g. a volunteer organization, we should also stick to our roles and do not try to interfere in tasks assigned to others in an unhealthy manner as it can pull down the productivity of the whole group.

Humility and humbleness:

In the ayah quoted above, Allah SWT mentions the attitude of bee as “سُبُلَ رَّبِّكَ ذُلًّا” showing its humility and humbleness in doing its task. It doesn't start considering itself something special and remains a humble member of community continuing to offer the best it can. It doesn't become arrogant on what it does. On contrary, those who are weak in their faith, become disrespectful and arrogant when they are busy or are able to achieve something. True believers are always humble and deal with people with humility and respect.

“
The servants of the Most Merciful are those who walk upon the earth in humility, and when the ignorant address them, they say words of peace.
”

Surah Al-Furqan 25:63

“
The Prophet (Sallallaahu alayhi wassallam) said: “Al-Kibr (proud and arrogance) is the rejecting of the truth and looking down upon people.”
[Muslim, At-Tirmidzi and Abu Dawud]
”

“
The Prophet (SAWS) said, “He who is humble for the sake of Allah by a degree, Allah will elevate him one degree, until he reaches the highest degrees and he who is arrogant toward Allah, Allah will lower him one degree until he reaches the lowest of low degrees.”
[Hasan Hadith; Narrated by Abu-Said Al-Khudri on the authority of Ibnu-Hijr Al-Asqalani, number, 89.]
”

“
The Prophet (SAWS) said, “Allah revealed to me that we should be humble amongst ourselves and none should show arrogance toward others.”

[Authentic hadith reported by Muslim in al-Sahih al-Jami', book 040, number 6856. Narrated by Ayad ibn-Hammar]

—”

“
—

The Prophet (SAWS), said: “He who has in his heart the weight of a mustard seed of arrogance shall not enter paradise.”

[Sahih Hadith: Al-Albany, 2894]

—”

No good deed is too small:

Despite producing a small amount of honey during its lifetime (1/12th teaspoon), the honeybee doesn't give up its work. As believers, we shouldn't consider a deed too small or give up on doing the little good that we do. We should remain content and continue struggling throughout our life to do good: we may see little benefit in the dunya but our main aim is the akhirah.

“
—

Messenger of Allah (salAllahu alayhi wa sallam) said:

"Do not disdain a good deed, (no matter how small it may seem) even if it is your meeting with your (Muslim) brother with a cheerful face."

[Muslim]

—”

“
—

The Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him) said: “Do (good) deeds according to your capacity...God does not grow tired of giving rewards unless you tire of doing good...The (good) deeds most loved by God are those that are done regularly, even if they are small.”

(Fiqh-us-Sunnah)

—”

Loyalty to Just ruler and government:

Honey bees are highly committed to the queen bee and do their best to fulfil its needs. So should be loyalty of true believers to righteous rulers and Emirs of their groups.

“
Allah SWT says:
Woe to those that deal in fraud,
those who when they have to receive by measure from men, exact full
measure.
But when they have to give by measure or weight to men give less than
due (Quran 83:1-7)
”

“
Prophet Mohammed ﷺ said: “ Whoever cheats us is not of us” (Muslim,
Tirmide, Abi dawood)
”

Queen bee in the bee hives, in return, is not only there to rule. Rather it serves the community throughout its life and playing its role in the sustainability of hive. Just Muslim rulers should be the same too and contribute to the good of Ummah rather than just sitting there and eating from what others have gathered for them.

“
Prophet Mohammed (Peace be upon him) said:
“One who exercise his authority and power unjust way will not enter
Paradise”
(Ahmed , Ibn Majah, Tirmidi)
”

Living within one's means:

Honeybees live within their means. There are no banks, loans or credit cards in the bees' world; only the resources they themselves gather and store. Like us, bees need to eat every day, and they do everything in their power to ensure a constant food supply by storing it – not so much for themselves, but for bees yet to be born. There is a clear lessons for believers in this.

“
"Allah will deprive usury of all blessing, but will give increase for deeds
of charity" (Quran 2: 276).
”

“

Narrated Jabir ibn Abdullah: Allah's Messenger cursed the accepter of interest and its payer, and one who records it, and the two witnesses; and he said: They are all equal (Muslim).

”

“

Abu Huraira related that the Prophet said: On the night of the Miraj I came upon a group of people whose bellies were like houses. They were full of snakes which could be seen from outside their bellies. I asked Gabriel who they were, and he told me that they were the people who had practiced Riba (Interest). (Ahmad, Ibn Maja)

”

“

Abdullah ibn Hanjalah related that the Prophet said: A dirham of Riba (interest) knowingly taken by a man is a sin worse than committing Zina (fornication) 36 times (Ahmad, Daraqutni).

”

Understanding the times and environment we are living in:

Honey bees analyse the environment they are living in and accordingly protect themselves from its harms. They know that this is the only effective survival strategy. They also fill up any gaps using propolis², which varies according to local conditions, and can protect them against localized pathogens. Similarly, believers should protect themselves, their families and brotherhood in faith from the harms of the society they are living in. Inclination towards the immoral, addictions, violence and other harmful effects should be tackled through appropriate means and as jama'ah (group).

Honest Communication:

Honeybees understand that honest communication is at the heart of community. Bees are great communicators and use

² Propolis or bee glue is a resinous mixture that honey bees collect from tree buds, sap flows, or other botanical sources. It is used as a sealant for unwanted open spaces in the hive.

vibrations and pheromones to pass complex messages around their colony. They keep the entire group in the loop; any vital tips like where vast amounts of pollen can be found are relayed to other members. True believers should also open in their communication to their community and refrain from hiding information that can be beneficial to their brotherhood in humanity and Islam. We should also utilize the most effective communication techniques and style to ensure that the message get across as it is supposed to be.

“
Abdullah b. Mas'ud raḍyAllāhu 'anhu (may Allāh be pleased with him) reported: The Prophet ṣallallāhu 'alayhi wa sallam (peace and blessings of Allāh be upon him) said, “Truthfulness leads to righteousness and righteousness leads to Paradise. A man will keep speaking the truth and striving to speak the truth until he will be recorded with Allāh as a siddeeq (speaker of the truth). Lying leads to wickedness and wickedness leads to Hell fire. A man will keep telling lies and striving to tell lies until he is recorded with Allāh as a liar.” [Agreed upon].
”

Consultation:

Bees also demonstrate a system of shoura (consultation) where they get consensus of key members of community while deciding location of a new beehive. So should be the attitude of believers. Rather than imposing our decisions, we should prefer community engagement and consultation.

“
“And those who answer the call of their Lord, and perform As-Salat, and who (conduct) their affairs by mutual consultation, and who spend of what We have bestowed on them;”
(Quran 42: 38)
”

“

Abu Huraira reported: I never saw anyone consult his companions more often than the Messenger of Allah, peace and blessings be upon him.

—
”
(Musnad Ahmad)

Ability to rise up from ashes:

Bees are ever-evolving. There have been natural disasters and climate changes, but bees have kept on growing, evolving and working through-out the history. Believers should also be the same. Whatever calamities we face and whatever destruction comes to us, we should be prepared to assemble ourselves back again and stand-up united to build the brighter future for our Ummah.

Learning from our experiences and history

Bees are exposed to a number of tasks and condition to enhance their vision and decision making. They also learn from each other to do the tasks better. So should be case of believer who should help each other in learning new skills and raising their proficiency through learning and development. Bees never stop learning and use natural forces to direct their actions in terms of finding food and monitoring the environment. They continue to visit the types of flowers that consistently offer them rewards, noting their colour and odour. Believers should also learn from their experiences and from their history and plan their future accordingly. We should not be ditched by same deception again.

“
—
Prophet Muhammad ﷺ said:
A believer is not bitten from the same hole twice
—
”
(Bukhari/ Muslim)

Conclusion:

If a person is willing to take guidance, even an insect is good enough to teach us volumes of lessons. May Allah make us among those who reflect on Allah's signs and learn from his ayats.

“

“The believers are only those who, when Allah is mentioned, feel a fear in their hearts and when His Verses (this Quran) are recited unto them, they (i.e. the Verses) increase their Faith; and they put their trust in their Lord (Alone);

Who perform As-Salat (Iqamat-as-Salat) and spend out of that We have provided them.

It is they who are the believers in truth. For them are grades of dignity with their Lord, and Forgiveness and a generous provision (Paradise).”

”

(Quran Anfal: 2-4)

ⁱ Kremen, Claire, et al. "Native bees, native plants and crop pollination in California." *Fremontia* 30.3-4 (2002): 41-49.